

Montana WIC Program

Retailer Newsletter

SUMMER 2012

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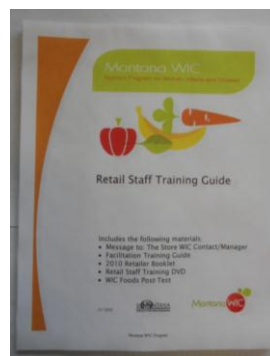
Please share this
information with your
staff.



2012 Training Issue!

Montana WIC

The training issue of the WIC newsletter should be used to train new store employees and provide a refresher to existing employees. Use this newsletter together with the following materials to provide comprehensive training:



Call the State WIC office for additional copies or refer to the Retailer page of the WIC website <http://wic.mt.gov>.

What is WIC?

WIC is a special supplemental nutrition program that teaches nutrition and provides healthy foods for families and brings money into your store and local community.

WIC offers families:

- Tips for eating well to improve health
- Breastfeeding promotion and support
- Health and social service referrals
- Benefits to buy healthy foods and formula

Who Qualifies for WIC?

In order to qualify for WIC, families must meet four eligibility criteria.

- 1) Household income guidelines
- 2) Be a pregnant or postpartum woman, an infant or a child under 5 years of age
- 3) Have a medical or nutritional risk factor
- 4) Live in Montana



Montana WIC Facts May 2012

- ⇒ WIC participants served – 20,339
- ⇒ Authorized retailers - 200
- ⇒ Benefits (checks) paid - 53,875
- ⇒ Benefits (checks) rejected - 412
- ⇒ Top rejection reasons:
 - » Missing stamp - 247
 - » Illegible stamp - 17
 - » Over Max Price – 88 (32 of these are FVBs redeemed for more than the value printed on the benefit!)
 - » Missing Signature - 21



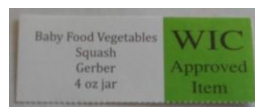
Program Booklets

The Food List pages of the program booklet are the best tool for resolving disputes about what WIC shoppers can buy. Refer to the enclosed Minimum Stocking Requirements sheet for the quantities that need to be available on store shelves at all times.

Montana WIC provides Participant Booklets in English and Spanish. The Retailer Booklet and the Participant Booklet Food List pages are identical for quick and easy reference. All cashiers should be familiar with the booklet and how to determine if a food item is WIC approved. Keep a copy of the Retailer Booklet at each check stand. The booklet currently in use states “Effective October 2010” on the cover.



Shelf Tags



Use of “WIC Food” shelf tags under WIC-approved foods makes finding the right foods easier for WIC shoppers! Proper placement of shelf tags also helps minimize disputes at the check stand. WIC would encourage each store to designate someone to go through your store (Retailer Booklet in hand), once a month, and make sure the tags are correctly placed under all WIC-approved foods. The tags are item specific – do not remove the “WIC Approved Item” part of the tag from the food item description. Contact the State WIC Office for additional sets of the tags.



Door Decals

Montana WIC Participants are encouraged to shop in stores that display the “We Accept WIC Benefits” decal. Place the decal in a highly visible location on or near the entrance to the store. Retailers with more than one entrance may request additional decals. The old paper posters should be removed and replaced with the door/window decal.

Formula 101

As a checker, it is your job to help the WIC shopper buy exactly the formula listed on the benefit. If a WIC shopper needs a formula other than the one listed on the benefit, they must return to their WIC clinic and have the benefit reissued. No substitutions are allowed.

- 1) Read what's listed on the benefit.
- 2) Verify that the formula listed on the benefit and the formula label match.
 - Quantity
 - Container size and type (e.g. cans, bottles)
 - Brand (e.g. Similac Advance)
 - Format (e.g. powder, concentrate, ready to feed)



Quantity

Container size & type

Format

Brand

MONTANA WIC PROGRAM PO BOX 202951 HELENA, MT 59620-2951		SPECIAL SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION PROGRAM FOR WOMEN, INFANTS & CHILDREN (WIC) WIC ENCOURAGES BREASTFEEDING		ACCT # 838100 10-128	
CLINIC ID	WIC ID	PARTICIPANT NAME	FIRST DAY TO USE		
27277	95100221233	POLLY POCKET	4/13/2011		
5 12.4OZ CAN(S) POWDERED SIMILAC ADVANCE			MONTANA RETAILER STAMP		DATE USED
					LAST DAY TO USE
					5/13/2011
			INITIALS	CORRECTION	
			AMOUNT OF SALE		
RETAILER - DO NOT ACCEPT UNLESS YOU HAVE A MONTANA WIC CONTRACT HANDLE THROUGH FSMC AN AFFILIATE OF SECURITY STATE BANK, HOWARD LAKE, MINNESOTA 55434			SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT OR AUTHORIZED PROXY		

Authorized WIC retailers are required to purchase WIC formula from an approved source. Please refer to the MT WIC website for the updated list.

Montana WIC - Approved Food Questions

The Food List pages of the Retailer Booklet outline the approved foods a Montana WIC participant can purchase with their WIC benefits. Use the booklet as a reference. Here are some clarifications based on your questions:

- **Baby Food** – Single varieties only, no blends, dinners, organic or DHA added. The benefit will list baby food meat if it can be purchased – no substitutions allowed!
- **Cold Breakfast Cereal** – Only cereals listed on the approved food list may be purchased with WIC benefits. Cereals are reviewed for nutritional content, price and availability before they are added to the list. All MT WIC approved items are listed in the booklet.
- **Soy Beverage** – The benefit will specifically state which soy beverage can be purchased – no substitutions are allowed. Silk is not approved for WIC – not enough protein.
- **Juice** – Participants may choose from the flavors and brands listed on the page as long as the size they purchase is the size listed on the benefit and the food list. They may choose to purchase a store brand or a national brand. No juice cocktails, juice blends or cranberry juices are allowed. No Welch's Lite or Tree Top 3 Apple Blend. Low sodium V8 or tomato juice is allowed.
- **Fruit & Vegetable Benefit** – WIC Participants may purchase any combination of fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and/or frozen vegetables using the approved food list as a guide. FVB's may not be redeemed for more than the value printed on the benefit. Participants may not pay the difference and stores are not paid for overages. Redemption guides may be found in the booklet.

Check Your Knowledge - WIC Redemption Procedures

Think you know the correct way to handle WIC benefits at the check stand? Test your knowledge by putting the jumbled procedures in the right order.

- ____ Ring up the shopper's foods, using the WIC benefit & Food List as a guide.
- ____ Ask for the WIC Program Booklet and hold onto it.
- ____ Get the shopper's signature and match it with a signature on the WIC ID page of the Booklet.
- ____ Check the "First Day to Use" and "Last Day to Use" and write the transaction date on the benefit.
- ____ Stamp your store's 4-digit WIC ID Number on the benefit.
- ____ Say "Yes" to coupons, specials, buy-one-get-one and store discount cards.
- ____ Give the customer a receipt and return the WIC Booklet.
- ____ Write in the total purchase price in the "Amount of Sale" box.

Place the numbers in the spaces, in the order provided, to reveal the answer. 3 - 1 - 6 - 2 - 8 - 4 - 7 - 5

WIC Shopper signatures:

WIC requires shoppers to sign their benefits **after** the cashier writes in the total. **Never** ask a shopper to sign the benefit before filling in the "Amount of Sale". It is considered a violation that could lead to disqualification of your store. Remember to compare the signature to the one on the ID page of their Booklet. This is the **only** ID you may use or ask for while transacting a WIC purchase. Remember to use black or dark blue ink on benefits. Colored ink does not scan well at the bank.



Good customer service:

Remember to treat WIC shoppers with the same courtesy and respect as all customers. A WIC transaction is complicated for shoppers and checkers. A friendly smile, eye contact, and politeness go a long way in making the WIC shopping experience positive for everyone. If you have an issue at the register, use the green complaint form to document the occurrence and send it to the State WIC office.



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Montana WIC Program

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Who do you call?

Retailers should contact their Local WIC Agency for concerns regarding complaints and general program questions.

Contact the State WIC office if your store will be changing ownership or you have questions about your contract.

Contact Carrie Reynolds (406-444-4746) at the State WIC office when issues arise with WIC benefits or prices change for WIC approved foods.



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